CHAPTER 11

CONTRIBUTIONS

This study has tested fifteen (15) hypotheses, which were developed after an extensive review of literature. Eleven (11) of them were based on theoretical relationships of a conceptual model (Figure-1). This model was tested through confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling. The objective of the other four (4) hypotheses was to test the mean differences between congruent and incongruent celebrity-brand pair on some important advertising effectiveness measures such as advertisement believability, attitude toward ad etc. Independent samples t-tests were used to check these hypotheses. The results of this study have some important implications for literature as well as managerial practices. This chapter is divided in two sections. First section discusses about the academic implications of this study and second section discusses the managerial implications.

11.1. Contributions to Literature

The present study advances academic work in the area of celebrity endorsements and extends our knowledge on factors that impact consumers’ response to celebrity endorsements. The major contribution of this study is that it has tried to integrate all three major areas of literature in celebrity endorsement i.e. source credibility, meaning transfer and match-up hypothesis. The literature review on congruence or match-up hypothesis earlier, Kamins (1990); Misra and Beatty (1990); Kamins and Gupta (1994); Lynch and Schuler (1994); Kirmani and Shiv (1998); Till and Busler (1998, 2000); and Lee and Thorson (2008) have explored celebrity-product category congruence and its impact on consumer attitudes. However they have not included personality as the stimuli of match-up, the congruence of celebrity endorser with the specific
brand, and the subsequent impact of celebrity-brand congruence impact on consumers’ attitudes and intentions. Additionally, none of the studies have seen the impact of personality-based celebrity-brand congruence on the important criteria for celebrity endorser selection like their suitability to endorse and their credibility. This study addresses these research gaps by going beyond celebrity-product category match to celebrity-specific brand match based on personality traits and by investigating its impact on endorser suitability and credibility. The study has used real brands unlike previous research to maintain the ecological validity. This study has gone further to enhance our knowledge by verifying the subsequent impact of personality-based congruence on ad believability (ABL), consumer attitudes (AA and AB) and intention (PI). However the findings have shown the mediating role of AA between ABL to AB and PI, which supports the affect transfer theory (McKenzie et al., 1986; and Brown and Stayman, 1992). The findings of the study also support the results of various studies which explained the impact of congruent celebrity-brand through the motivation theories such as social adaptation (Kahle and Homer, 1985; Kamins, 1990) and attribution theory (Rifon et al., 2004). The social adaptation theory argues that the matching celebrity would have adaptive significance with the existing brand and it would lead to the positive evaluation of the new source of information i.e. the celebrity. The positive and significant impact of celebrity-brand congruence (CONGR) on endorser suitability (ES) and endorser credibility (EC) supports this argument. The attribution theory/correspondence theory argues that the individuals as social perceivers attribute internal causes (correspondent attribution) to an action, when they feel that the action had taken place because of actual dispositional properties of the actor, otherwise they attribute external causes (non-corrrespondent attribution) to the action. The theory further argues that the effect on individuals’ attitude would be more in case of correspondent attribution than non-corrrespondent
attribution. The present study has found the higher values of ABL and AA for congruent pairs than incongruent pairs of celebrity and brand. Therefore the findings support the attribution/correspondence theory as well.

11.2. Contributions to Practice

The results of this study would be helpful for the practitioners. The study findings have shown that brand and celebrity personality jointly play role in impacting how consumers evaluate celebrity endorsements. Results of the study could be useful to brand managers with the task of selecting celebrities to be paired with product brands. This study would help them to understand the impact of the celebrity and endorsed brand’s personality congruence on important advertising effectiveness measures like advertisement believability, attitude toward ads, attitude toward brand and purchase intention. The findings of the study have shown the positive and significant effect of endorser suitability (ES) and endorser credibility (EC) on advertisement believability (ABL) under celebrity personality-brand personality match. It has also shown the subsequent impact of ABL on important advertising effectiveness measures such as attitude toward ad (AA), attitude toward brand (AB) and purchase intention (PI). Further as per the results, the congruent celebrity-brand pairs had high ABL and AA than the incongruent celebrity-brand pairs. Therefore, the findings of the study suggest practitioners to keep the endorser personality-brand personality match as the possible criteria to hire celebrities for endorsing their brands. This study would also prove beneficial for the celebrities. As the findings have shown the significant impact of celebrity personality-brand personality match on celebrity endorser suitability (ES) and credibility (EC); celebrities should be cautious and should endorse those brands only, which can enhance their suitability and credibility. The findings suggest that in case of celebrity endorsing non-matching brands, the endorsement could harm their suitability to endorse and their
credibility. This would impact the future endorsements of the celebrity. Hence, the study would also help in mitigating the risks associated with the celebrity endorser and would be helpful for celebrity management groups.